

Article

Solid as a Rock: Media Portrayals of Cross-Border Activities

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Abstract: Much has been said and written about the importance of cross-border activities. With the process of opening up the borders, these cross-border activities became increasingly intense. Nevertheless, much less has been revealed on media portrayals of cross-border activities. The purpose of this article is to analyse, assess, and interpret regionally orientated contributions that deal with cross-border activities and are broadcasted within the national TV reporting in Czechia. While material or tangible aspects of cross-border activities have been traditionally examined thoroughly, the media reflection of those activities has not been captured in an adequate manner so far. The article deals with the issue from both quantitative and qualitative points of view. This complementary view is useful from the perspective of the interpretation of findings. Moreover, such an approach largely helps to fill in the existing research gaps. It has been found out that media portrayals of cross-border activities are inadequate from both quantitative and qualitative perspectives and barely reflect genuine processes related to cross-border interactions in real circumstances. Taking into account the general importance of cross-border activities and processes for developments of whole territories, less plastic media capturing of these activities and processes might seem surprising.

Keywords: cross-border activities; local and regional development; media portrayals



Citation: Suchacek, J. Solid as a Rock: Media Portrayals of Cross-Border Activities. *Sustainability* **2022**, *14*, 15749. <https://doi.org/10.3390/su142315749>

Academic Editors: Joanna Kurowska-Pysz, Rui Alexandre Castanho and Luís Carlos Loures

Received: 18 October 2022

Accepted: 16 November 2022

Published: 26 November 2022

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1. Introduction

Territorial development of various ranks is affected by myriads of factors. In essence, they can be divided into tangible ones and intangible ones. While material structures largely epitomise tangible factors of development, our attention will be focused on their immaterial or intangible counterparts.

Reputation, i.e., the image or position on mental maps, can be ranked among intangible factors of the development at the country, regional, or urban levels. Mental maps are based on the perception of attractiveness of the territory in question. These perceptions are bound to the preferences of various target groups. It is worth noticing that the subjective perception of the given territory does not always correspond to the genuine territorial attributes and characteristics. There are no doubts that the degree of the congruence between perceptions and realities of examined territories is geographically rather differentiated [1–5].

Nonetheless, regardless the intensity of the above-mentioned congruence, the perception of individual territories plays larger or smaller role in the process of the selection of the investment site or the place of the residence.

Put succinctly, territorial development of various ranks is dependent also on intangible characteristics of individual territories. That is why it is desirable that one becomes acquainted with mental maps in order to comprehend the whole spectrum of territorial characteristics [6,7].

There are numerous channels via which mental maps can be created. Media are playing an increasingly important role in that context. Media cannot be treated as the mere observers of events around us but as factors that co-form the environment we are living in. It is natural that media can barely express the reality in its complexity and that is why they are rather selective when intercepting our milieu and individual events. The consciousness of the population about individual countries, regions, cities, towns, or rural areas is shaped

among others just by the influence of media. And internal mental maps within peoples' heads are subsequently transposed into concrete behaviour [8–10].

The main mission of media is describable as the provision of objective and unbiased pictures of reality. Yet, in reality, genuine geographical configurations and media portrayals differ. This can be accounted for by the specific processes, such as agenda-setting or agenda-cutting or the way of interpretation of phenomena and events as well as their evaluations [11–18].

Subsequently, media can be perceived as an influential and at the same time increasingly aggressive institution. From chronological perspective, media affect their audiences mostly in the short run. Nevertheless, if the given information is repeated persistently, it may have a long-term connotations and contributes to shaping territorial images and mental maps. Places, regions, and whole countries that do not enjoy positive media attention are typically omitted by investors, tourists, the wider public, and other groups. Succinctly, the media have formed a virtual universe existing concurrently with the material one [7,9].

From a geographical perspective, one can distinguish national, regional, and local media. It is natural that the influence of national media is higher than that of their regional and/or local counterparts [19,20]. Our primary focus is represented by regionally orientated topics related to cross-border activities and interactions as broadcasted within national TV coverage in Czechia.

The main objective of this paper is to analyse, assess, and interpret regionally orientated contributions that deal with cross-border activities and are broadcasted within the national TV reporting in Czechia. This will be accomplished from both quantitative and qualitative perspectives and will enhance our knowledge on the reflection of cross-border activities within the national TV coverage.

Notions, such as cross-border co-operation, cross-border alliances, cross-border networks, or clusters are nowadays in vogue. Nonetheless, the media reflection of these activities, which is of undoubted importance, has not been investigated in an adequate manner so far. There exist virtually no examples in the literature on cross-border activities as perceived within TV reporting. This represents a substantial research gap. The paper constitutes an attempt to bring the information that may partly fill in the above-mentioned research gap.

The research question posed in the framework of this article is as follows: what are the top detailed themes broadcasted within a national TV coverage and related to cross-border activities in country's fourteen self-governing regions?

As already indicated, the investigation will be performed at the level of self-governing regions in Czechia. Since the country is relatively small in terms of its area, it is no surprise that mere three self-governing regions including capital city of Prague, Central Bohemian region, and Vysočina region do not touch the state border. All remaining eleven self-governing regions enjoy the direct opportunity for cross-border activities and interactions. This creates an appropriate material for the purposes of this article.

Our paper helps to disclose media portrayals of cross-border activities as well as the degree to what extent the TV reporting of cross-border activities is compliant with real processes in particular territories. The theme is especially important from the perspective of sustainable territorial development, which is in turn interconnected with both tangible and intangible perspectives.

The article proceeds as follows. After the introduction, the theoretical background follows. This chapter concentrates on the key aspects of the article revolving primarily around media, territories, borders, and cross-border activities and interactions. Materials and basic methodical approaches are intercepted within the next chapter. This forms the basis for results that are of both quantitative and qualitative nature as well as their interpretation. The whole paper culminates in the form of a synthetic discussion and conclusions derived from previous analyses.

2. Theoretical Background

2.1. On the Media and their Selective Perception of Reality

There are little doubts that one of the most relevant underlying factors standing behind the formation of the final pattern of mental maps are media. This is a rather tricky issue mainly in view of the fact that mental maps mirror the reality of individual places and regions with differentiated quality.

From the geographical point of view, media represent a certain informational gate between “inner” groups, i.e. municipal and regional players involved in territorial development, and “outer” groups, such as visitors, potential visitors, investors, non-regional entrepreneurs, etc. Local and regional politicians, institutions, and entrepreneurial actors aim to attract media attention and use media to address their voters, citizens, or employees. Vice versa, these agents participating in local and regional life receive the information about respective territories primarily just through the media [9]. As it has been shown in previous studies, TV reporting has one of highest degrees of the impact on the wide public and is representative enough [9,14,20].

Contemporary TV coverage acts as one of the determinants of the environment we live in. The strategies that accentuate certain events and phenomena have much to do with agenda-setting. Vice versa, there is also agenda-cutting that consists of ignorance of certain topics [10,15,21]. From this perspective, the conception of gatekeeping is of utmost importance. The selection of events to the media is based on certain routine rules [22–26].

Gatekeeping is affected primarily by the attractiveness of a topic. The authors of [27] pinpointed 12 factors altogether that are relevant for the selection of an event or phenomenon and its further processing in media:

- Frequency: an event that is developed in the framework of a news medium’s publication cycle will be selected with a higher likelihood for publication than a one that takes place over a long time span.
- Threshold: events have to pass a certain threshold before being recorded at all; with the growing intensity of the event, there is a higher likelihood of the selection of this event.
- Unambiguity: the more intensely an event can be unequivocally understood and interpreted, the more likely it is to be selected.
- Meaningfulness: events that are culturally familiar are more likely to be selected.
- Consonance: on the basis of experience, the news selector may be able to predict that an event will be newsworthy, thus creating a kind of pre-image of an event, which in turn augments its chances of becoming news.
- Unexpectedness: among meaningful events, the unexpected or rare event is more likely to be selected.
- Continuity: an event already present in the news has a high probability of remaining in the news as it has become familiar and easier to interpret.
- Composition: an event may be selected as news because it fits into the overall composition or balance of a newspaper or news broadcast.
- Reference to elite nations: the activities of elite groups or powerful nations are perceived as more important than the actions of other nations.
- Reference to the elite: the actions of elite people, who are more likely to be famous, may be seen by news selectors as having more consequence than others and, because of the former’s fame, news audiences may identify with them.
- Reference to people: news that can be presented in terms of individual people, rather than abstractions, is likely to be selected.
- Reference to something negative: negative events are generally unambiguous and newsworthy.

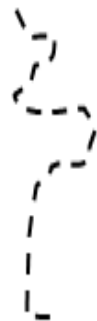


Although this list is not complete at all, it still represents a benchmark, *sui generis*, in the realm of media studies [9]. At the same time, the list serves as an appropriate basis for our media-territorial approach utilised in this paper.

2.2. On the Nature of Borders in the Light of Cross-Border Activities

Developments in numerous territories are affected by borders. Since borders constitute an artificial product of human activities, they are not inherent to the space. As an artificial product they suppress natural spatial interactions and communication. Additionally, the meaning of borders in the wider context is co-determined by the geographical distribution of the population [28–36].

At the beginning, there existed no official borders. For a long time, physical characteristics, such as mountains and rivers, were of utmost importance with regard to the formation of societal activities. Later on, concurrently to the development of the society and the intensification of various separate interests, borders have been invented [37] (see Table 1).

Table 1. Borders and their characteristics from an evolutionary perspective.

Period	Description of Borders	Mobility of People, Goods, Energy, and Information	Typical Shape and Characteristics of the Border
History	Vaguely delimited, high penetrability, partly guarded, partly overlapping borders because of inaccurate delimitation; physical geography matters	Low intensity of mobility	
Nation State	Precisely delimited, low penetrability, strictly guarded, location of borders enforced by administrative/political decisions and international relations	Medium and high intensity of mobility, but borders act as barriers and filters of spatial interactions	
Present Tendencies and the Future	Precisely delimited borders, high penetrability, lower protection, borders can still be protected any time, partly overlapping borders with regard to intense spatial interactions	High intensity of mobility, borders do not stifle spatial interactions in border areas	

Borders played largely a symbolic role before the nation state appeared. Self-governing initiatives were prevalent and on the whole boundaries were much less relevant than in the

last two centuries. Natural physical barriers were typically utilised as border lines. These frontiers started to be protected more permanently, but by no means systematically, in the 13th century. There existed wide boundary strips rather than precisely defined border lines. From a contemporary point of view, demarcation was rather inaccurate.

The population was rather static at that time. Generally, wider-scale spatial social and economic interactions were relatively restricted with regard to underdeveloped or non-existing means of transportation. This contributed to the symbolic rather than real function of frontiers. This was reflected mainly in the fact that borders were not guarded along their entire length [37].

The advent of the nation state involved a non-negligible geographical re-configuration as the centralized nation states were shaped. This meant, among others, the strict delimitation and rigorous protection of borders. Infrastructure began to be constructed just in compliance with the spatial profile of the political power in these nation states. While capital cities and adjacent territories became the pivotal winners of the birth of the nation states, severe socioeconomic marginalization befell frontier places and regions.

Frontier territories typically suffered from a lack of interaction and communication with other places and regions. This unfavourable situation found ample reflection in the form of heightened transactions as well as transportation costs. Subsequently, central administration typically profited from fixed national borders. And vice versa, border territories played the role of the periphery. In contrast to general belief, frontier areas were initially quite populous and economically important. However, over time, their socioeconomic importance cardinally decreased [37].

In the course of time, border areas became a symbol of sparsely populated territories remote from the centres. Limited infrastructure and communication links to the rest of the country became symptomatic for these territories. From a political and administrative point of view, border territories were generally low in the hierarchy of governmental priorities. These territories attracted an attention only if there was a possibility of expansion into neighbouring states. As a result, such regions typically transformed into uniquely problematic and largely alienated areas.

Succinctly, borders acted as walls or at least filters that stymied natural spatial interactions. At the same time, peripheral status beset many border territories. As stated previously, frontiers constitute an artefact. Nonetheless, the impacts of this artefact turned out to be really intense [37–42].

The contemporary process of vanishing borders can be contemplated primarily in the European space. This applies mainly to the long-term perspective. This process is largely beneficial. Nonetheless, it cannot be omitted that after opening previously strictly protected state borders, individual regions have to be prepared to cope with stronger competition and should adapt their strategies accordingly [43–46].

It has to be mentioned, COVID-19 should be treated as a crisis of a special kind as it substantially slowed down the pace of the mobility of people and goods, travelling, and other relevant symptoms of globalising tendencies. COVID-19 and its impacts can be comprehended as a braking factor of above-mentioned trends. In many cases, it meant the return to the pre-globalisation period as a strict renewal of formerly formal borders took place. Additionally, since borders are not inherent to the space, we are entitled to talk about the re-appearance of the artefact as one of consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic or regression in the frame of the natural evolution of borders. Recently, security problems in a way supported that trend. Yet, at the same time, in the near future, borders will likely tend towards re-opening again and the pre-COVID-19 developmental trajectories related to the borders will arguably prevail. So, the optimistic scenario will likely materialise.

In the light of previous paragraphs, it seems to be peculiar that virtually no attention has been paid to the large spectrum of transboundary activities and their media portrayals. This is quite surprising, mainly in view of the fact that cross-border activities and interactions affect developmental possibilities and limitations of whole territories in a substantial way. Cross-border activities and interactions can be presented in both positive, e.g. cultural

exchange, and negative, e.g. smuggling, ways in the media. Thus, media portrayals of cross-border activities and interactions might support those processes on the one hand as well as impede them on the other. The final image of the borders and border activities in the given territory is naturally shaped among others just by media coverage.

3. Materials and Methods

The information produced by the media impact a large part of the population. TV coverage embodies one of pivotal components of media. The contributions published within TV news reporting represent one of the primary sources of information not only for the wider public but for important actors of territorial development as well.

A database containing TV news contributions was provided by Media Tenor Company. It is an international consortium that was active in Czechia from 1996 onwards. The main specialisation of the company consists in the content analysis of media information. Altogether, 54 667 TV news contributions was recorded. These contributions have been divided into 30 thematic categories and cross-border activities belong among them. The differentiation of these contributions enables a content analysis of the TV coverage.

In this article, we focus on the NUTS III regions that correspond to self-governing regions in Czechia. The individual TV contributions are analysed in the frame of a 2004–2011 time span. The data include contributions published in the framework of four TV news reporting programmes: *Televizní noviny TV Nova*, *Zprávy FTV Prima*, *Události of Czech TV*, and *Události, komentáře of Czech TV*.

Two of these programmes—*Televizní noviny TV Nova* and *Zprávy FTV Prima*—are broadcasted by two private TV companies orientated primarily to profit, i.e. TV Nova and FTV Prima. The remaining two programmes, i.e. *Události* and *Události, komentáře*, are brought by public Czech TV that provides public service and its activities are determined by the special legislation on TV broadcasting 483/1991 Coll. Act of the Czech National Council of 7 November 1991 on Czech Television.

From a quantitative point of view, we are dealing with amounts of regionally related reports depicting various cross-border activities and interactions that appeared within a national TV broadcasting in the course of the 8 investigated years. The quantitative component of our analysis is epitomised by the number of regionally bound contributions dealing with cross-border issues and their share on the total amount of contributions in respective years. This is useful also for the determination of how often and intensely border issues that are regionally bound resonate within the wide public.

Subsequently, the share of the number of contributions on cross-border activities in respective self-governing region on the total amount of contributions on cross-border activities in all self-governing regions will be put into the context with the share of the population of the given self-governing region on the entire population of the whole country. This is primarily because of the fact that the population should be perceived as a spiritus agens of virtually all relevant activities happening within given territories and cross-border activities can be ranked among them.

The qualitative point of view represents a useful complement to the quantitative perspective. The qualitative perspective consists in the focus on more detailed contributions related to cross-border activities and bound to the given self-governing region. And just the particular contents of individual contributions draw us on regionally differentiated media portrayals in the sphere of transboundary activities.

Concrete themes include the large spectrum of cross-border activities, starting with Czech-German, Czech-Austrian, Czech-Polish, or Czech-Slovak relations via protection of the state borders towards visits of foreign politicians, for instance. So, altogether 31 topics has been analysed in the framework of the qualitative view on the whole issue.

4. Results

4.1. Quantitative Perspective

As for the quantitative dimension of the issue, in general, the total amount of contributions related to the cross-border activities turned out to be volatile between 2004–2011. Nonetheless, it is worth noticing that regionally bound national TV reporting has only a minimal interest in cross-border activities. More precisely, the entire share of all contributions related to cross-border activities on the total number of all contributions was smaller than 1 percent in each of the examined years (see Figure 1). As for the hierarchy of all 30 topics investigated in the frame of a TV reporting, the cross-border themes occupy the 21st position. This can be accounted for by the fact that cross-border activities and interactions in general are not so attractive from the perspective of gatekeeping.

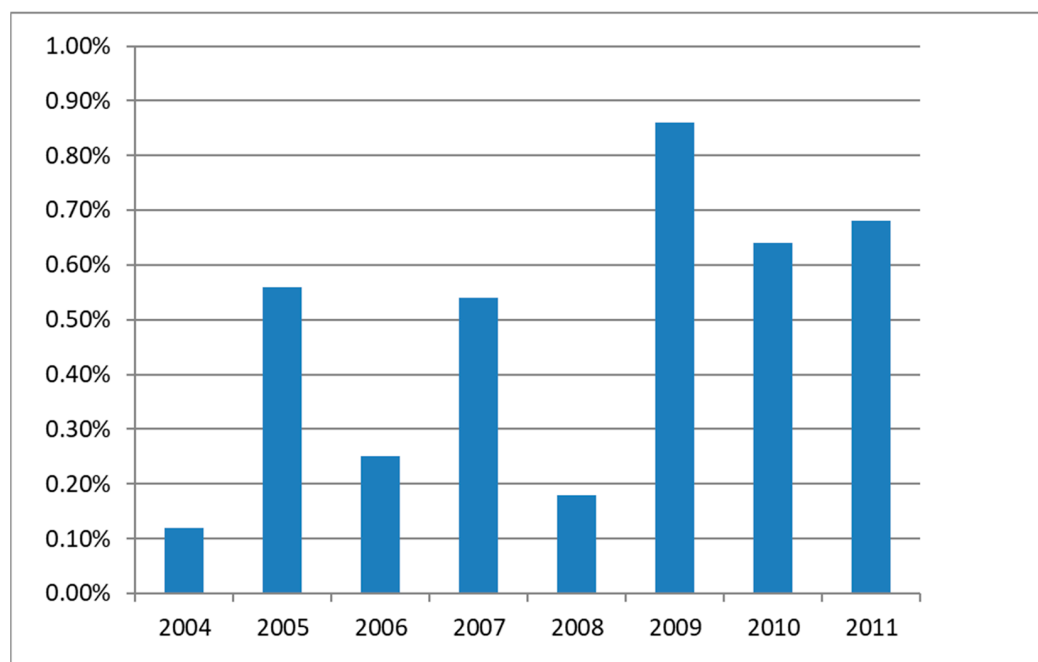


Figure 1. Share of topics related to cross-border issues on the total amount of topics between 2004 and 2011.

However, it is palpable that even in the years of various special events the media interest in cross-border activities did not differ so much. The Czech Republic became a member state of the European Union on 1 May 2004. This was the culmination of a long period in which relations with the European Communities were strengthened. Nonetheless, the total number of all contributions related to cross-border activities on the entire number of all contributions reached a mere 0.12 percent in 2004.

On 21 December 2007, the Czech Republic and further eight EU member states joined the Schengen border-free zone. The respective amounts of contributions related to cross-border activities on the entire number of all contributions reached 0.54 percent in 2007 and 0.18 in 2008.

The Czech European Union Presidency in 2009 took place under difficult conditions, due to the economic crisis combined with an unstable international conditions. Because of these medially attractive facts, perhaps, the share of contributions related to cross-border activities and interactions on the entire number of all contributions was 0.86 percent in 2009.

In case one focuses upon the regional differentiation of TV reports, the largest attention has been dedicated to Prague, which is the only city in the whole country. Since the city acts as the social, economic, and political-administrative capital of the whole country, one can expect its dominance also in case of cross-border activities and processes. This is mainly

because of visits of foreign politicians on the one hand and the fact that all substantial policies related to cross-border activities have something to do with the city's institutions.

Yet, one cannot omit the presence of virtually all relevant national media headquarters in the capital city, which can be the next underlying factor of overwhelming Prague's victory in quantitative terms (see also [19]). The concentration of head offices of national media in the capital city affects many features of the media-territorial perception and interpretation of the whole country.

Further attention concentrates upon South Moravia, which is also rather populous; its regional capital Brno is the second largest town in the country in terms of population size. In case of other self-governing regions, there are almost negligible shares of reports and the number of contributions is generally under proportion in relation to the population weight of the region in question (see Figure 2).

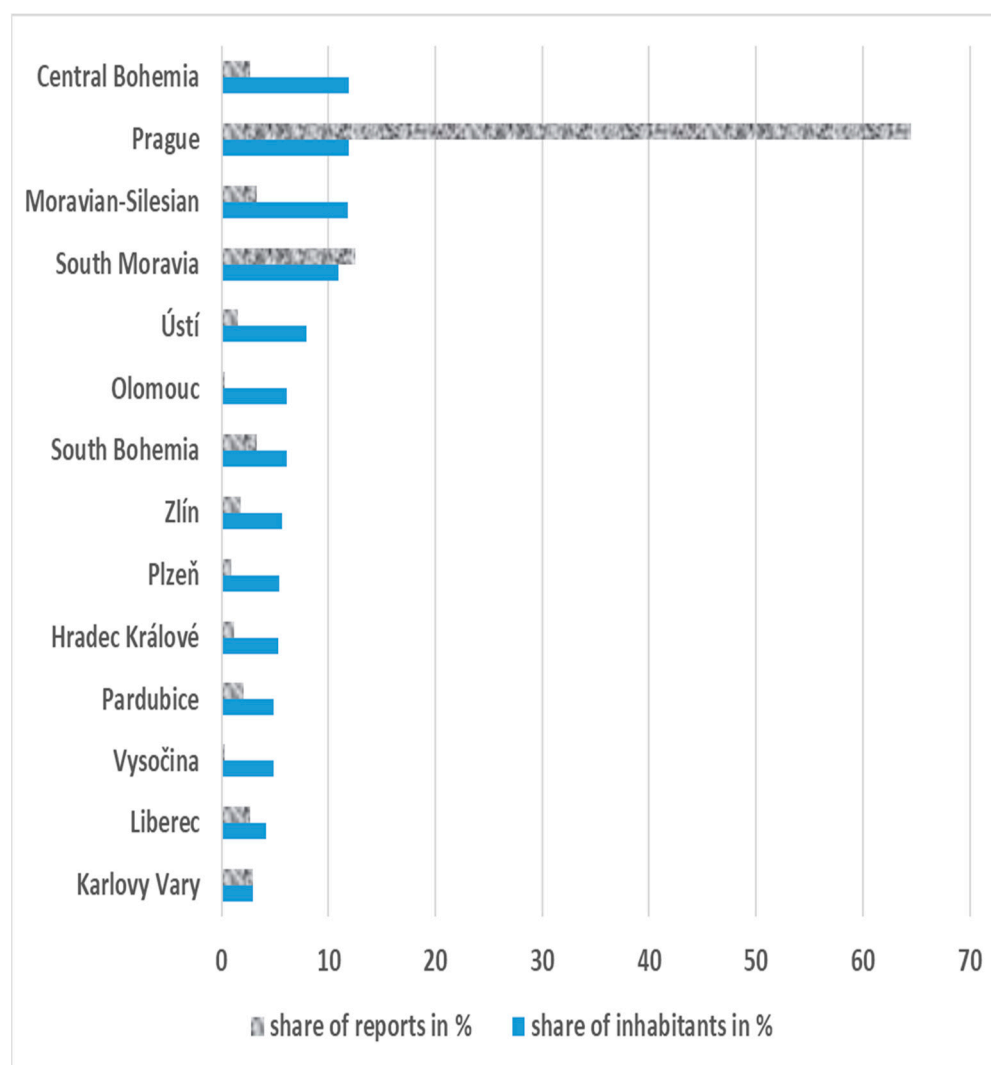


Figure 2. Share of the number of contributions on cross-border activities in respective self-governing region on the total amount of contributions on cross-border activities in all self-governing regions and share of the population of the given self-governing region on the entire population of the whole country.

As already mentioned, population present in the concrete spatial framework embodies the socioeconomic potential of the territory in question. The media contributions related to individual self-governing regions should thus at least roughly comply with the population weights of these territories. However, it turns out that this is not the case of self-governing

regions in Czechia in the realm of contributions describing cross-border activities bound to concrete territories. This is in consonance with the results of previous studies analysing other aspects of live in country's territories [9,14,19,20].

4.2. Qualitative Perspective

As indicated, the qualitative perspective constitutes a logical complement to already depicted quantitative point of view. Indeed, a more detailed thematic composition of individual contributions draws a more concrete picture of media reality. Our attention was directed to 31 detailed themes intercepting various kinds of cross-border activities.

Visits of foreign politicians, humanitarian aid, other topics related to international relations and international politics or measures in combatting against terrorism can be ranked among the most frequented regionally bound topics broadcasted within a national TV coverage.

The most frequented cross-border activities that appeared within a national TV reporting can be seen in Table 2. Media portrayals tend to show quite homogenous description of the investigated self-governing regions. This is in discordance with their territorially rather unique profiles and specificities. Foreign political visits and humanitarian aid account for eight out of fourteen top themes appearing within a TV coverage.

Table 2. Top topics related to cross-border activities.

Self-Governing Region	Top Theme
Prague	Foreign political visits
South Bohemia	Czech-Austrian relations
South Moravia	Foreign political visits
Karlovy Vary	Humanitarian aid
Hradec Králové	Cross-border contacts
Liberec	Czech-Polish relations
Moravian-Silesian	Foreign political visits
Olomouc	Other international topics
Pardubice	Humanitarian aid
Plzeň	Humanitarian aid
Central Bohemia	Foreign political visits
Ústí	Czech-German relations
Vysočina	Humanitarian aid
Zlín	Promotion of Czech culture abroad

The next interesting feature of this analysis stems from the fact that the vast majority of the top themes appearing in relation to individual self-governing regions is planned in advance. The only theme depicting the spontaneous processes of cross-border contacts, including going to the foreign markets and similar interactions, appeared in the TV reporting dedicated to Hradec Králové self-governing region. Further top themes, such as Czech-German, Czech-Austrian, or Czech-Polish relation, which are often based on complicated histories, confirm the political nature of the examined themes.

Table 2 provides us with the synthetic answer to the research question posed at the beginning of this article. It has been found that top detailed themes related to the country's fourteen self-governing regions that appeared within a national TV coverage are as follows: foreign political visits, humanitarian aid, Czech-Austrian relations, Czech-Polish relations, Czech-German relations, cross-border contacts, promotion of Czech culture abroad, and other international topics.

5. Discussion and Conclusions

From a material or tangible point of view, disappearing borders and the subsequent vivification of cross-border activities and interactions should be seen as one of the conditions supporting the potential for greater societal activeness of various kinds of territories rather than a panacea. If local and regional authorities have sufficient manoeuvring room, open

borders will bring a mostly positive effect. Open borders can be seen as a crucial condition for stimulating the endogenous potential of self-governing regions and localities [47,48].

More intense cross-border activities encompassing both qualitative and quantitative dimensions can undoubtedly contribute to positive socioeconomic developments in frontier regions. Instead of their absolute disappearance, borders can function in an amended form that does not deform natural interactions. In spite of recent unfavourable tendencies including the coronavirus crisis, conflict in Ukraine, and refugee crisis, frontiers mainly in the European space are becoming increasingly softer, which holds true in the longer run.

The next issue is based on the fact that despite generally sound developments in the realm of physical borders, many psychological frontiers are still remaining in people's minds. These cannot be mitigated or even deleted at once; on the contrary, their redress will require much longer. This draws us on the media view of cross-border activities.

From the media point of view, cross-border themes are characterised by somehow ambiguous features. These themes cover both positive (such as cultural exchange) and negative (e.g. transboundary smuggling) domains. The latter is usually attractive from a media point of view as society is traditionally more sensitive to negative aspects of its life. This is also compliant with the conception of gatekeeping [9].

However, a smaller presence on TV is not necessarily a bad sign. On the contrary, it may indicate that cross-border activities of various kinds are functioning smoothly, naturally, and without any major incidents and that is why they are less attractive from the media point of view. Previous research uncovered that large parts of regionally bound contributions broadcasted within a national TV coverage are dedicated to criminal offences, traffic collisions, and other negative categories [14].

On the other hand, it has to be added that the lack of reports on cross-border activities stymies the initiation of larger general consciousness on their importance. In the long run, this may lead to the lack of appreciation of the fact that cross-border relations are historically the most intense within the European space and this involves numerous benefits of both tangible and intangible natures.

It is worth noticing that a slightly higher share of regionally bound news tackling the cross-border issues on the total amount of news was observed merely in 2009. In 2004, when Czechia became the member of the European Union, there did not appear many mentions in the news on the undoubtedly augmented possibilities in the realm of cross-border activities.

On 21 December 2007, the Czech Republic and eight further EU member states joined the Schengen border-free zone. The respective amounts of contributions related to cross-border activities on the entire number of all contributions reached a mere 0.54 percent in 2007 and 0.18 in 2008. So, the real impetus for both quantitative and qualitative widening of cross-border activities did not transpose into media coverage. This can serve as the confirmation that in spite of gradual opening and a certain softening, the state borders still indeed remain solid as a rock, at least in the mental and media spheres.

In 2009, Czech presidency—abroad widely criticized—of the European Union took place. This implied much richer cross-border activities, which attracted a bit higher media attention. In 2009, the share of topics related to cross-border activities on the total number of themes reached the highest value; nonetheless, it still remained under 1%. Thus, the media proved to be largely oblivious to cross-border activities.

The highest amount of news depicting cross-border activities was published in the capital city of Prague, which represents an outlier, *sui generis*. This result could be to some extent expected because of Prague's exclusive position within the country; nonetheless, the victory of the capital city is an overwhelming one. It can be contemplated how Prague overshadowed rather populous Central Bohemia, which forms a compact hinterland surrounding the capital city. However, Central Bohemia has virtually no say in forming cross-border and other policies.

In sum, it has been found that from a quantitative perspective there is the dissonance between the percentage share of reports and percentage share of population in individual

self-governing regions. From a qualitative point of view, it has been found that the TV reflection of cross-border activities is not compliant with the real situation in individual self-governing regions of Czechia. The same holds true for medially attractive topics, such as road casualties and criminal offences [14] or more serious themes related to the European integration [46].

As for the thematic composition, the news describing cross-border activities have a largely mosaic character and, with the exception of foreign political visits, humanitarian aid, or specific bilateral relations, no dominant theme could be found. Thus, regional specificities, stemming primarily from the complicated history, projected themselves rarely and the spectrum of detailed themes devoted to cross-border activities and processes does not seem to be wide enough to draw on the real issues of investigated self-governing regions.

Obviously, these empirical results bring also some policy implications. First, it should be taken into account that in Czechia, the head offices of all national media are located in the capital city. This is compliant with country's centripetal socioeconomic profile and many events and phenomena in more distant regions are prone to be interpreted from a monocentric perspective. Subsequently, more attention should be devoted to the events in individual regions. This can be further multiplied by more active marketing activities of the regions in question. One can also recommend the relocation of national media into more towns that would help to mitigate the aforementioned monocentric view of regional events.

Last but not least, one should take into consideration the limitations of the study. In this paper, there was not adequate room for more contextual handling these rather complicated issues, which moreover tend towards dynamic changes. A wider framing would be beneficial indeed, but it requires much larger room.

So far, TV reporting has one of the highest degrees of impact on the wider public and is representative enough; nonetheless, internet media are increasingly replacing traditional TV coverage. Subsequently, further constraints can be seen in the absence of the analysis of internet media. Albeit methods in this field are still developing, future research directions should reckon with internet media as their influence is growing virtually every day.

Funding: This research received no external funding.

Conflicts of Interest: The author declares no conflict of interest. The funders had no role in the design of the study; in the collection, analyses, or interpretation of data; in the writing of the manuscript; or in the decision to publish the results.

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